The RAMTOP

FALL 1991

PUBLISHED BY THE GREATER CLEVELAND SINCLAIR USERS GROUP

Just Like Freddy Kruger

Since this is my first issue of the RAMTOP, I'll try to let you know what I have planned for the newsletter. First I'll try to regularize the issues to 4 times a year. We will print Sinclair items as well as information of a general interest. I hope to have most of you contribute something so that we may revitalize our organization. We will prune our mailings to paid up members and to active organizations which are still publishing newsletters. OK now pay up your dues if you are in arrears and lets get going.

Next month, November, our meeting on the EAST Side will be preempted and held on the 2nd Friday instead of the first. In December we will have our annual Christmas sale and auction on the first friday at the Euclid Square Mall. So get your unwanted items ready to sell, this will be the one meeting of the year not to miss. I have it from well informed sources that Doug G. will be there and he has promised not to go home until he has spent all of his money. Also at this meeting we will have election of officers and I will not be running again since taking on the news letter. If you don't show up you may be elected!

Recently for the 2068 we are attempting to update a version of the MSCRIPT shell that was written by Jack Doheney for SPDOS.

The primary problem with it is that is does not use the modular nature of SPDOS to overlay basic areas of the program. I have found many bugs with the version I am working with and Jon Kaczor will be helping me with the hooks to the code as he is more familiar with the program than I.

Also our project about writing M/C routines to access the JLO interface for programs like HiSoft C etc. is on hold until more people can get involved.. Anyone out there have tips to get us started.

Like many of you I have been working with the PC more and more for applications than the 2068. I have abandoned MSDOS on the PC in favor of DRDOS which seems to me to have more features and to have better documentation than anything Microsoft has ever done. The new version 6 has a built in disk optimization routine which can increase the disk space up to 100 %. If you are considering MSDOS 5, you probably should take a look at DRDOS 6. If you prefer shells and windows then the Microsoft product will probably be better for you. If you use the command line more, then the Digital Research's DRDOS will be better for you. One fact of interest is that this DOS was written partially in the UK by some of our friends who wrote programs for the QL. You may expect a high quality product!

I also have picked up a laptop, an orphan, the Tandy 200 which has some of the same qualities as the Sinclair machines. The basic is a little clunky and the CPU a bit on the slow side but it seems to use memory efficiently and allows me some computing mobility. It has a built in 300 baud modem. The Tandy machine uses a tokenized Microsoft Basic with a very unusual method of screen display. It became very apparent to me how superior the Sinclair Basic is, in ease of use and accessibility. The Tandy relies heavily up the RS-232 port for accessories. It supports bank switching between 24k static rams. Sounds kind of familiar. The 200 as an orphan has been hacked somewhat although not to the degree of the 2068. I have connected it to my PC with a null modem an will try to rig up a cable to an RS-232 interface that I have for the Spectrum to see if it will work.

OFFICIAL STUFF
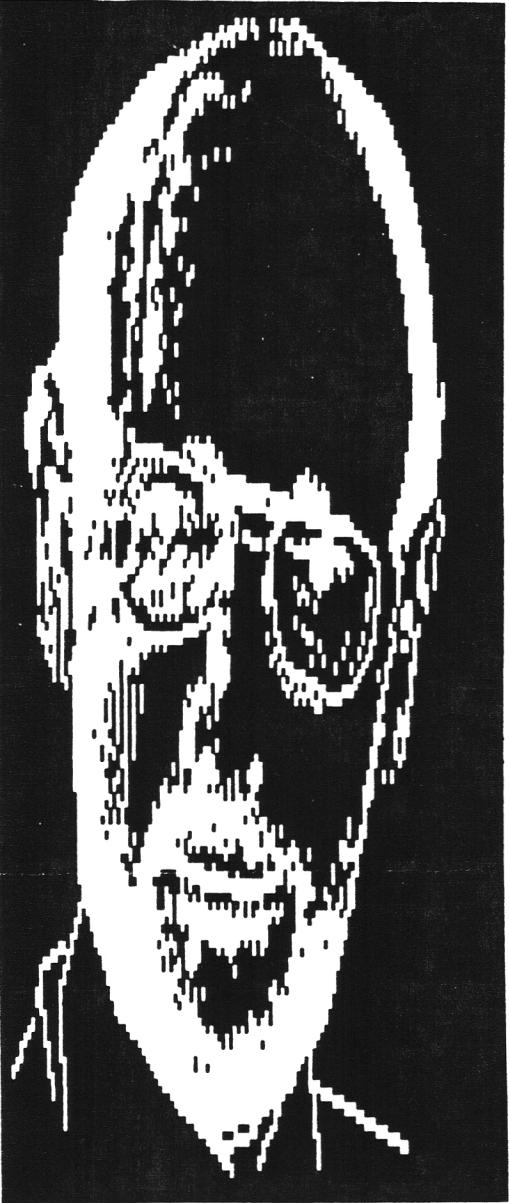
PROGRAM OF THE MONTH

IT'S STILL BASIC, ISN'T IT?
(Part two)

Let's see how our old friend, PRINT AT is now handled. In
IBM BASIC we must use the keyword LOCATE. The command is
LOCATE a,b,c,d,e where: a) is the row b) is the column,c),
d) and e) determine the appearance of the cursor anddo not
affect the use of PRINT. Their use is optional. The PRINT
statement begins at the new cursor position. For example,
try this:

```
10 LOCATE 3,5
20 PRINT "Example"
RUN
```

The word "Example" will appear at Row 3, Column 5.

The TAB function is almost the same in both BASICS. With
SINCLAIR it is PRINT TAB n;a$. With IBM it is PRINT TAB(n) a$.

IBM also has the function SPC.It determines the number of
spaces skipped in a PRINT statement, as follows:

PRINT "STRING" SPC(5) "STRING".

Let's go on to some graphics. First we have to change the
screen mode. SCREEN 0 is the default mode and is for text
only. For CGA monitors SCREEN 1 displays 320 x 200 pixels
and SCREEN 2 displays 640 x 200 pixels. SCREEN 0 has no
graphics.

Sinclair's PLOT is matched by IBM PSET (a,b) where (0,0)
is the upper left hand corner of the screen. These
coordinates are absolute to the screen. If we command
PSET STEP (a,b) then the pixel spacing is relative to the
previous pixel location.

When we went from the 1000 to the 2068 we lost UNPLOT.
IBM picks this up with PRESET. This command will erase a
point established by PSET, and can use STEP for a relative move.

Both PSET and PRESET can set the color of the point as in
PSET (a,b),c where c denotes the color.

CIRCLE is almost the same in both graphics, with three
parameters determining the center and radius. Remember
that the center is located from the lower left corner in
Sinclair and upper left in IBM.

LINE leads us to a whole new area of operation. Sinclair's
LINE is used in SAVE to start a program automatically. IBM's
LINE is a bit like Sinclair's DRAW. Here you must specify
the beginning and ending of the line as follows:
 LINE (a,b) - (c,d).

You can add color to PSET, CIRCLE and LINE by adding a comma
and then a number to designate the color. The range is 0 to
3 for CGA.

Adding still another comma and the letter B will produce a box
whose diagonal locations are determined in the LINE example
given above. If you write BF instead of B you get a filled box.
So we can end up with this command:

LINE (a,b)-(c,d),e,B where a,b is the starting point,
c,d is the end point, e gives the color, B makes a box
or BF makes a filled box. To demonstrate, try this:

```
10 SCREEN 1
20 CLS
30 FOR X = 0 TO 3
40 LINE (100,100)-(150,150),X,B
50 PRINT "Press any key when ready."
60GOSUB 5000
70 NEXT X
80 STOP
5000 WHILE INKEY$=""
5010 WEND
5020 RETURN
```

Try this short program again sub-stituting BF for B in Line 40.

Farewell, from your Previous Editor:

As always, Hello to you all. Well all good things come to an end. NO TS STILL LIVES! I mean I am stepping down as your editor at least for the time being. Most of you in our group know that I had a major stress attack last July. I thought I was having a heart attack! I was in Parma Hospital for a couple of days and found out that the ticker is in good shape but I have to change my life style. This means no rushing around and worrying for no reason and so forth. My job is stressful and I am learning to deal with it. I am alsowalking about 5 miles a day now which takes time. I simply don't have enough time in the day for everything that needs to be done.

I have been your editor for many years. I took over in 1984 (July I believe). Up to that point, Chris Raynak did a very good job. We have had many great articles over the years! I remember the hours spent typing and printing on the 2040 printer and pasting the columns to for the finished newsletter. I always liked to put enough graphics in to keep your interest. Ted Knyszek did the graphics and front page for several years. Back in those days we usually found a way to get the copies for free or at a very low cost. Al Gedris did the copying for several years. If it were not for this, we would have had to raise dues drastically. We have been paying for coping for some time now and the treasury is quite low now. Future issues will have to be only a few pages at best unless dues are raised. Postage is a killer too since we have such a high change with other newsletters. We have sent as many to other news letters as to our own members!

Any way, I must step down as editor at least for a while and turn it over to Tom Simon. He will do his best to bring you a news worthy and interesting newsletter. I will still be contributing articles and I hope you all will take a few minutes to send in your favorite program or write an article. Many of you have IBM compatibles now. (including me) It is quite simple to use your word processor to write the article and give the disk to Tom at the meeting. (Save as an ASCII file) You can also upload by modem to Tom or me or even to Free Net in Cleveland. We need new stuff there too! Take care to you all and I will be seeing you at the meetings! JGD
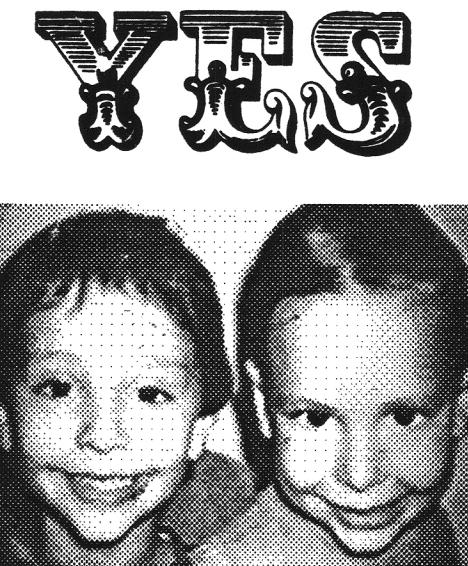

BROTHERS TWO

The two good looking boys shown above are the son's of Jon and Rose Kaczor and are the bigest Timex computer supporters in the whole state. Now your wondering how could these two young men be that hyped up on computers. Well every other week or so they watch there dad, Ted Knyszek, and Neal Elias drive off to a late computer meeting. They don't cry, rant or rave or stamp there feet. They just smile even though they would rather be playing with there DAD.

THANKS TO Zak and Adam.

Written by Ted Knyszek
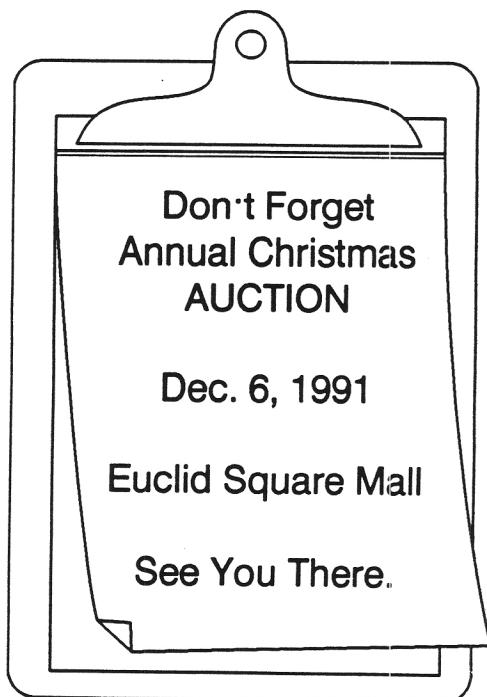
Does not compute.

Now here are some addresses of Sinclair Publications for you from Bill Ferebee's column in the Vulcan Computer Magazine:

Really.

Update Magazine, still being published by Frank Davis $18 for 4 issues.

Update Magazine
P.O. Box 1095
Peru, Indiana 46970

A QL publication, International QL Report, edited by Bob Dyl. Subscriptions are $10 for 4 or 6 issues. Two issues have been publishedso far.

Sea Coast Services
15 Kilburn Court
Newport, RI 02840

A new publication ZXIR, Clieve Alive! the publication of Snug.
$12 for individual or $15 for user group.

Don Lambert
1301 Kiblinger Place
Auburn, IN 46706

A FDD newletter for the Zebra or the Timex disk drive. Write for price and availabity.

FDD Newsletter
1274 49th St. #821
Brooklyn, NY 11219

Bob Swoger   CATUG   99-01-01
613 Parkside Circle
Sreamwood   IL   60107-1647